

To: The House Higher Education Committee

From: The Office of Government Affairs & Policy, UT Southwestern Medical Center

Date: September 9, 2020

Subject: Information provided, per request, related to the COVID-19 pandemic

1. Are institutions of higher education ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester? When applicable, please speak directly to classroom and lab settings, dormitories and dining halls.

Campus-wide: Currently, UTSW is in Phase II of its reopening, which requires limited occupancy while allowing for increased operations. Progressing from Phase II depends on COVID infection rates and information we learn about the disease, hospital capacity, availability of personal protective equipment, testing capacity and effective interventions. To keep all members of the UTSW community safe, the following protocols have been implemented in all settings:

- Strict nonpharmacologic interventions across campus including occupancy limits, masking, social distancing throughout all public spaces and elevators, and hand sanitizing.
- If you can perform duties remotely, do so.
- Meet virtually whenever possible.
- Group meetings or gatherings shall be limited to five or fewer and individuals must maintain six feet and wear a mask.
- No travel permitted for UTSW-related work, with few exceptions upon approval.
- Temperature screening for entry to clinical buildings
- Badge access required for non-clinical facilities including academic and other spaces.

Research laboratories: Labs and core facilities may only staff up to 50 percent of normal occupancy at any one time. Up to two people per wet-bench laboratory bay and up to two people per enclosed tissue-culture room are permitted, as long as researchers wear masks or facial coverings, maintain physical distancing, and follow all standard

laboratory safety practices. For additional information, please visit:
<https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/covid-19/researchers/resuming-research.html>.

Clinical space: All faculty, staff and trainees entering Clements University Hospital (CUH), Zale Lipshy Pavilion and ambulatory sites must scan their badge to access the facility while simultaneously attesting to their being symptom free and having no known exposure to anyone outside of work who has tested positive for COVID-19. Those who do not pass the screening must return home and consult with Occupational Health.

2. What plans are in place for on-campus COVID-19 testing? Do institutions have the capacity to provide testing on campus, both in terms of available supplies and labs to process tests? UTSW is a testing site and has capacity to test members of our community on an as-needed basis.

3. If applicable, what are plans for collegiate athletics this Fall? How will student athletes be kept safe? If fans will be permitted to attend events, how will fans be kept safe? N/A

4. What do projected enrollment figures and formula funding look like to institutions for this school year? Enrollment at UTSW is expected to remain steady, as is generally the case for academic medical centers whose students have already elected to become healthcare practitioners or biomedical scientists and are committed to continuing their training with proper institutional safety protocols in place.

5. Has there been a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic? Faculty and staff at academic medical centers and UTSW have generally remained committed to their positions in the healthcare and support settings throughout the pandemic.

6. Health Related Institutions were exempt from the 5% budget cuts earlier this year, due to their important role in resolving the public health crisis. What are some of the programs, research, and responses to the pandemic that our Health Related Institutions have contributed?

- Testing:
 - ~76,000 tests performed to date
 - Average ~550 tests/per day
 - UTSW developed PCR assay for detecting infection
 - Manufactured viral transport media for test samples and hand sanitizer for frontline personnel

- Supported state testing needs through Governor Abbott's statewide testing initiative and regional needs processing tests for Parkland Hospital, Children's Health System, Texas Health Resources and Methodist hospital facilities, and others across North Texas
- Research: halted from March through early June except for existing and new coronavirus studies. While research has resumed under Phase II at only 50% capacity in laboratories, more than 180 SARS-CoV2 research projects are underway, 14 clinical trials and a large-scale prevalence study. For additional information, please visit: <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/covid-19/researchers/projects.html>
- Patient Care: Have provided care to COVID-19 patients, and now able to accept transfers of more complex patients needing the type of specialized care provided at an academic center like UTSW.

7. How have state and federal COVID-related funds already impacted budgets?

The Executive Order issued by Governor Greg Abbott to limit non-elective procedures to ensure capacity to respond to the pandemic and treat COVID patients had a direct impact on our clinical revenue – resulting in an estimated loss of \$3M/day or about \$130M. UTSW subsequently received ~\$35 million in CARES Act funding to mitigate the loss, and has begun to recoup some additional revenue as patient care resumes that we hope will also lower the total loss.

UTSW does not receive state funding for patient care, operating its owned hospitals and clinics strictly through generated revenue. The loss of revenue does have an indirect impact on the ability of UTSW to continue cross subsidizing its medical education and supplementing the state's Graduate Medical Education formula funding to help sustain the largest public residency program in Texas.

8. How has the pandemic affected the overall financial status of small and rural community colleges? N/A

9. Does your institution have a public, online dashboard for the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases which is updated daily? If so, what is the link to the dashboard? UT Southwestern has a public online dashboard that reports total positive COVID-19 cases of its 19,000 campus employees, including clinical. These are updated weekly and disaggregated by source of infection. <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/covid-19/>